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ABSTRACT

This guidebook is one in the Target Topic Series developed to highlight issues and concerns related to effective community education operation. It is intended for the community educator and community education advisory council member who wish to gain a better understanding of advisory councils. The material provides a framework for advisory councils in community education. A pretest covers material discussed in the guidebook. The guidebook explores the background and reasons for councils; looks at council roles; and discusses council organization and relationships, by-laws, and functions. It also discusses council inservice, meetings, maintaining council growth, and the ongoing process of serving the community. A posttest repeats the pretest questions. (YLB)

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SERVING THE COMMUNITY

A GUIDEBOOK FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCILS

TARGET TOPIC SERIES

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TARGET TOPIC SERIES

SERVING THE COMMUNITY

A GUIDEBOOK FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCILS

MARTHA L. STANLEY

THOMAS L. FISH

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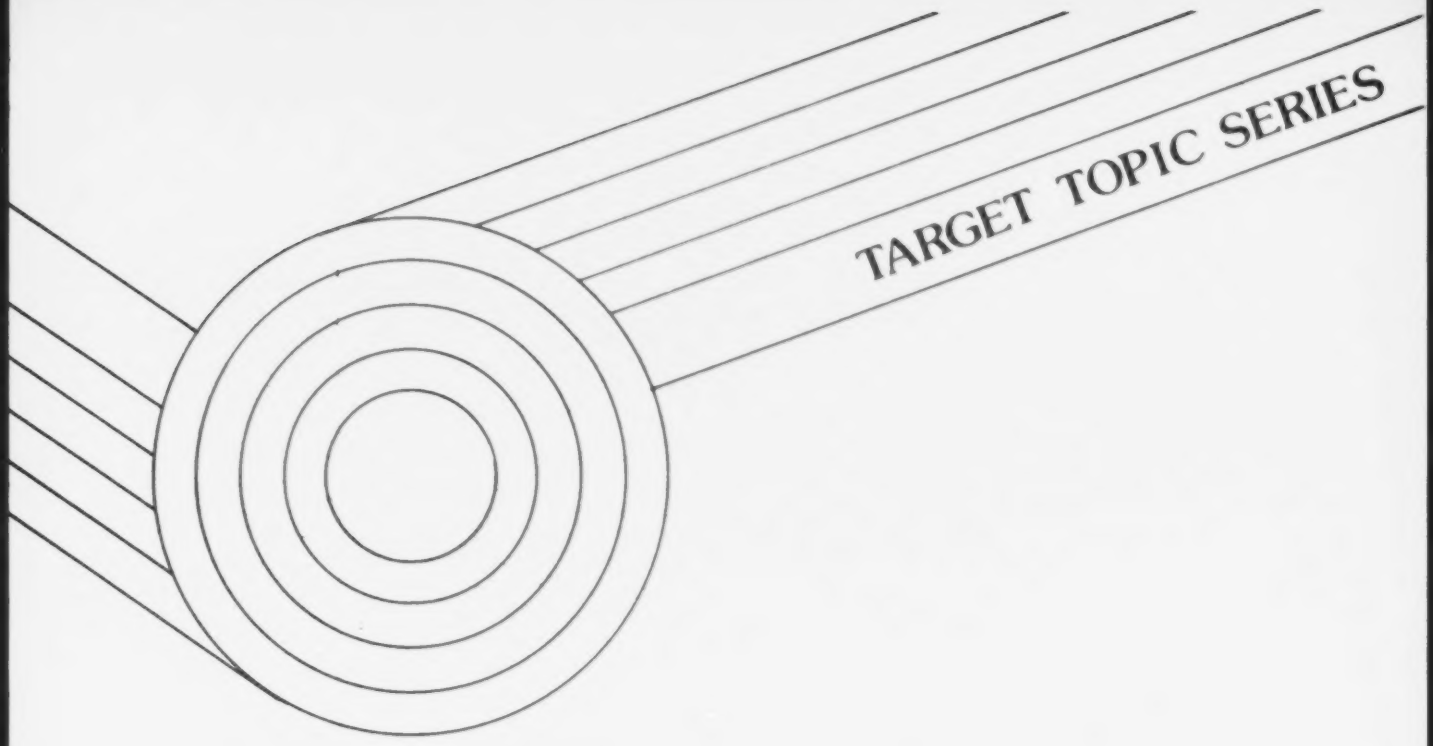

THE TARGET TOPIC SERIES

The Target Topic Series is a set of guidebooks developed for community educators and Community Education advisory Council members. The guidebooks discuss many topics related to effective Community Education operation: Council Skills, Community Assessment, Planning, Public Relations, Finance, Programming, Legal Questions, Staff Development, Community Involvement, Coordination and Cooperation, and Evaluation.

The Target Topic Series is designed to highlight the skills or the issues that relate to each subject; and presents an overview which should be of value to the reader.

The Series was developed in response to an identified need for materials to aid and enrich the Community Education process in the state of Minnesota, particularly for areas that do not have ready access to inservice opportunities. The materials are applicable to Community Education programs throughout the country and are available for national distribution.

The Target Topic Series is written by staff members of the Community Education Center at the College of St. Thomas and by Community Education professionals in Minnesota. The series is distributed by the Community Education Center at the College of St. Thomas.

The interpretations and conclusions contained in this publication represent the views of the author and not necessarily those of the Mott Foundation, its trustees, or officers.

FOREWORD

Community Education has the potential for bringing about significant and far-reaching change in the lives of the members of the communities which it serves. However, without the help and the advice of the Community Education advisory council, Community Education would be limited to providing classes and activities based only on the best thinking of the community educator. No single individual, no matter how wise or how caring, can possibly know the total community, its needs and problems.

The advisory council is the vehicle that allows Community Education to move beyond the provision of predetermined programs into a community-serving role of identifying real needs and serious problems and providing the answers to these needs and problems. The advisory council is the key in initiating the Community Education process. It is the link between the community educator, the school, and the community.

This guidebook should provide insights into the increasingly critical role that the council plays in our communities. It will also provide some practical tools that will allow council members to take on their responsibilities with understanding, knowledge, and with a belief in their own capabilities.

Bridget Beck Gothberg, Director of the Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose (Minnesota) School District played an important part in the development of this guidebook. She shared not only her research on advisory councils but also her personal experience in working with councils. We thank her for her work at, and with the Community Education Center at the College of St. Thomas and we are grateful for her support and friendship.

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INTRODUCTION

This guidebook is written for the community educator and the Community Education advisory council member who wish to gain a better understanding of advisory councils. The material provides a framework for advisory councils in Community Education. It explores the background and reasons for councils, looks at council roles, functions and responsibilities, and discusses council organization and relationships.

The guidebook discusses why advisory councils exist; who serves on advisory councils; how advisory councils are structured; what advisory councils do; and how advisory councils can become effective.

The guidebook is not a comprehensive discussion about advisory councils in Community Education. Rather, it is meant to provide you with an overview of advisory councils. It is written to help you understand the roles, functions, and potential impact of advisory councils on Community Education. With this knowledge and understanding, you can develop a council that truly demonstrates the process that is vital to Community Education.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

(The following questions cover the material which is discussed in this guidebook. We suggest you answer them before reading the text. Your answers will point out your present level of knowledge and will make you aware of areas to which you should pay particular attention.)

1. What is the relationship of the advisory council to Community Education?

2. In what way are councils part of community involvement?

3. What power does the advisory council have?

4. What is the major cause of problems between the community educator and the council?

5. Should school administrators serve on the advisory council?

6. Describe the difference between a neighborhood council and a district-wide council.

7. What factors should be considered when determining council representation?

8. How can a council be assured that all segments of the community are represented?

9. List and describe three methods for selecting council members.

10. What is the optimum size for a council?

11. What is the advantage of having set terms of office for council members?

12. How many meetings per year are needed for successful council operation?

13. List responsibilities of the council chairperson.

14. Why should councils have a vice-chairperson or chairperson-elect?

15. What functions are performed by the executive committee?

16. What is the relationship between the advisory council and its committees?

17. What is the major benefit of advisory council by-laws?

18. List ten functions of advisory councils.

19. How are councils involved in planning?

20. What is the role of the council in conducting needs assessments?

21. What steps should a council follow when addressing problems?

22. How are the functions of a council interrelated?

23. What is the importance of council inservice?

24. What topics should be included in a council inservice?

25. Why are set agendas critical to effective meetings?

26. What can be done to assure full participation at council meetings?

27. Why is it important to evaluate council meetings?

28. What are the phases of group development?

29. What methods can be used for council maintenance?

30. How can recognition of council members be provided?

THE ADVISORY COUNCIL METAPHOR

Many metaphors have been used to portray the Community Education advisory council. Educators and writers alike try to find the exact and proper metaphoric phrase that will describe what the Community Education council is--what it does, what role it plays, what it means to the community.

Some part of the human body is usually selected for analogous comparison, probably because Community Education itself is viewed as living, vital, and growing. The advisory council has been called the heart of Community Education, the backbone of Community Education and the soul of Community Education. Advisory councils have also been called the eyes and ears of the community and the hands that reach out to touch the community.

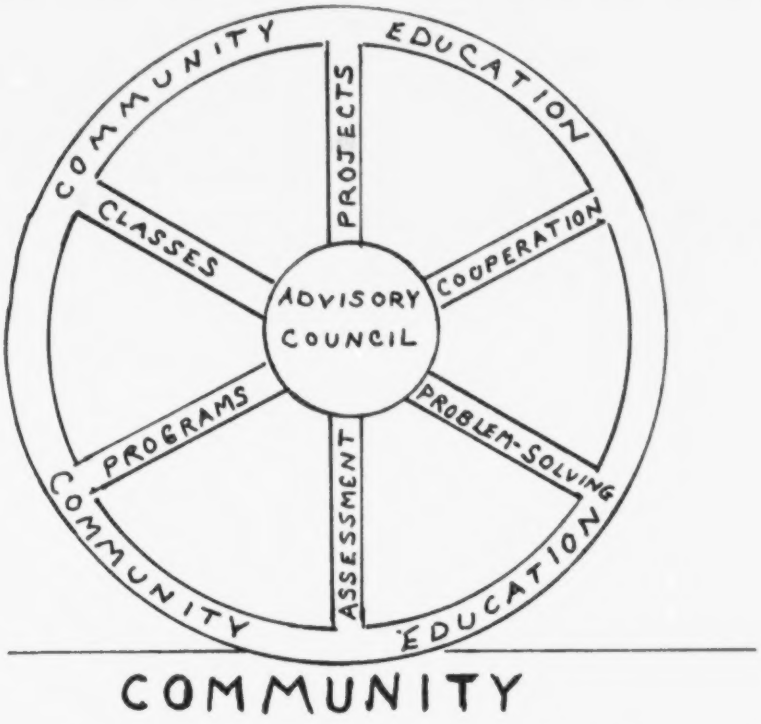
These metaphors are all good. They are descriptive of the function of the council, they stress the importance of the council to the whole organism, and, while somewhat romanticized, are honest comparisions. However, each of these metaphors must of necessity be used alone--one entity must be one of the parts or all of the parts. It is impossible to be the spine and the eye at the same time.

We need an additional metaphor, one that will create the mind picture of the council as it serves its role in Community Education and as it relates to the community. And, we need a metaphor that will not separate the council from Community Education or the community.

Picture, if you will, a wheel--a wheel, stable in its design yet capable of forward movement. Then, picture the parts of the wheel--the essential hub from which emanates the spokes of the wheel and the spokes themselves that attach to the rim. These parts together make up a wheel, and these parts

and the total wheel, when metaphoric assignments are made, describe the council in its relation to Community Education and also in its relation to the community.

The wheel itself--with all its parts--is Community Education. The wheel is able to operate and move because each of the components is part of the whole. The wheel, Community Education, exists as part of the community environment and is capable of forward movement within this environment. The hub, the core to which the other parts are attached, is the Community Education advisory council. Connecting the hub and the rim are the spokes which represent (or are) the programs, efforts, activities and processes of Community Education and which give Community Education its identity.



The picture is accurate; the metaphor is sound. As in all metaphors, occasionally the translation is not exact. Sometimes the hub is too small to support the spokes; sometimes the hub is defective so the entire wheel is out of balance. A spoke or two may be missing and this also prevents the forward motion of the wheel. But, in one respect the metaphor is without question; without a hub it cannot exist at all. And, the hub in the Community Education wheel is the Community Education advisory council!

If we accept the metaphor, we then must address the question of why a group of individuals from a community acting only in an advisory capacity are so essential to a revolutionary educational movement. To do this we need to look at the meaning and effect of citizen participation in general and at the meaning and effect of citizen participation to the Community Education concept specifically.

THE HISTORY OF INVOLVEMENT

The intent of this guidebook is to provide reasons and rationale for Community Education advisory councils and to explain the role and functions of these councils so that council members can perform their responsibilities with certainty and credibility. To meet the intent, we feel it is important that council members and others in the community, know why citizen involvement is important to the strength and performance of organizations. While this subject is discussed at length, in the Target Topic, Involving People: a Guidebook for Citizen Participation Through Community Education (1982), some of the historical perspectives relate specifically to Community Education advisory councils and are repeated here.

Philosophically, the American democracy is based on a belief in the importance, integrity and intelligence of the individual. Additionally, according to the American democratic philosophy, individuals banded together in a common cause are viewed as the basic unit of power. The Declaration of Independence states, "We the people of the United States...do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States of America."

This philosophical belief has remained constant in American social, political and economic life. The American public (or at least certain segments of it) knows that it can effect its own destiny through voting, speaking out, influencing decision makers, directing the media, and forming groups to bring pressure to bear on institutions and agencies.

The strong belief in empowerment of the people threads its way throughout our history. Students of American history know the story of how the colonists sought and took direction over their own lives in the American Revolution. These same colonists, after receiving "freedom" from England, continued to let the voices of the people be heard in public gatherings, town meetings and in representative assemblies such as the Constitutional Convention and eventually the Congress of the United States.

People also took charge of, or over, the education of their youth. Parents and community leaders developed schools that would prepare the young for the challenges of the tomorrows they would face. Schools became the focus of much of community life and, with the westward expansion, the local schoolhouse became the focus not only for educational enlightment but also for religious, political, and social activity.

Until the 1900s, community involvement did not need a definition; it was a way of life. The United States was a nation of ethnic neighborhoods in large cities, small communities settled around railways or waterways, and farmers who focused on a gathering point, be it the school, the church, the grange hall or the small town that grew up to provide service to the farming community.

The vast increase in population of the United States brought about both by the proclivity for large families and by the open immigration policies created a populace so large that direct effect on decision-makers became a physical impossibility. The large population and its ever-increasing needs required the establishment of institutions and agencies to serve the needs. The people--originally empowered to shape their own destinies--delegated rights of providing services to institutions which <u>they</u> created.

For the most part, historically and to this day, the institutions have served the people well. However, with the passage of time and with the continued increase in the numbers of people who must be served, the institutions have become remote from those who have delegated authority to them. They have developed their own identities and have come to establish their own missions rather than following a direct commission from the people.

When bureaucracies become too remote, when they are not responsive to the needs of people and particularly in times of crisis, the people intrude on the institutions and demand a say in how the institutions should serve the public. A groundswell in citizen participation occurred during the 1960s and 1970s. During these years, people--Blacks, women and the poor--began to ask the institutions of society to provide the equality that had been promised but consistently denied. During this period, the citizenry, convinced that national decision-makers were deaf to the voices of the people, banded together, protested and marched and formed pressure groups to bring about the needed changes.

Government, private institutions and large corporations listened to the demands and responded by organizing advisory groups and citizen committees that would serve to bridge the enormous gap that had developed between the people and those who made decisions that affected the people. These new avenues for communication met with mixed success. The failures, and there were many, can be attributed to several factors: the institutions were not really seeking participation but were making token responses to the demands, the involvement was required in order to obtain funding for projects and when the money dried up so did the commitment to citizen participation, and participation was based on an elitist selection process and did not include those who most needed to be included.

The successes, and there were many, can be attributed to the reverse of the causes of failure: some institutions committed themselves to really listen and respond to public input, some funded projects became part of a total community effort and continued after the money was gone, and some decision-makers truly sought, found or developed involvement of the groups their decision affected.

Now, in the 1980s, a new federalism has been defined and imposed on the people. Social programs that formerly were funded and controlled at the national level have been delegated downward, initially to the states but in practice (in many instances) to the communities. The tradition of involvement that came from the 60s and 70s continues today under the new federalism. The people have no choice but to take control over their own lives and the lives of members of the community. The money for social programs has disappeared from the national and state budgets, and the decision-making responsibility has been returned to the people. Individuals are again coming to

realize their right to influence and direct action to serve their needs and to provide solutions to problems. Obviously, isolated individuals acting alone, can have little effect. However, people who join together in groups and organizations, have enormous potential for bringing about the social change that is needed to provide answers to today's complicated questions. The Community Education advisory council is one such group of individuals, who by joining together to identify and provide for community needs, can make a difference in the lives of people.

COUNCILS AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Many councils are formed "after the fact" that is, they come into existence because of outside pressure, or because the organization or agency decides that it needs or wants public input. In Community Education the situation is different. The concept evolved with citizen participation as the hub; the advisory council was not an "add-on" to an educational movement, but instead was the essential component that gave the movement its identity.

Each element of Community Education requires community input in order to be successful. Because Community Education is the system through which the needs of community members are met with community resources--human, financial and physical--and because the only sure method of learning the needs and discovering the resources is through listening to the community, the advisory council is critical to the operation of Community Education. No single individual, no matter how thoroughly trained or perceptive he or she may be, is capable of identifying all the needs or locating all the resources to serve the needs. However, an advisory council, made up of people from all segments of the community can accurately relate what they know and what they have observed and can work together to see that the greatest needs are addressed in the most effective and efficient manner.

Each purpose and each function of Community Education needs the advice, direction and support of the advisory council. Returning to our metaphoric view of Community Education, the spokes of the wheel--the programs, efforts, activities and processes--all proceed from the hub--the council--and rely on the support of the hub. Without an advisory council, Community Education would not exist. Perhaps school doors would be open to the community and perhaps some classes and activities would be provided for community residents, but the process that assures a direct relationship

between real needs and responsive services cannot take place without an advisory council.

Councils play a role in all the operations of Community Education. They determine the needs of people in the community and help the professional staff plan the programs and services offered by Community Education. Councils assist in the development of the budget that finances the programs and services. They encourage cooperation with community agencies so that the needs can be fully met with the least amount of duplication. They serve as a forum for the discussion of community problems. And, perhaps, most important of all, advisory councils form a communication link between Community Education and the community.

Because advisory councils are an essential integrated part of Community Education, they exist wherever Community Education exists. Many school districts recognize that Community Education requires the input, work and support of an advisory council and include the advisory council as part of their formally accepted philosophy or purpose statement on Community Education.

Several state legislatures mandate citizen councils that are authorized to provide advice to all or part of the local educational system. Such mandated councils bring representative views of the community not only to the K-12 program but they also identify needs that can be served by Community Education.

The Minnesota state legislature, in 1976, mandated local advisory councils specifically for Community Education. The law states:

> each school board (levying for Community Education) shall provide for a citizens advisory council to consist of members who represent the various service organizations, churches, private schools, local governments, park, recreation or forestry services of municipal or local governmental units in a whole or part within the boundaries of the school district; and any other groups participating in the Community Education program in the school district.

The purpose of this specific legislation is to assure broad representation of community groups and to prevent a group of individuals with specialized interests from acting as a council which must represent all segments of the community.

The fact that Community Education advisory councils are required, both philosophically and often officially, reflects a belief in the significance of community involvement. The presence of the advisory council is a recognition that problems do have solutions and that ordinary people can influence these solutions. The existence of the council gives credence to the legitimacy of community power and the belief that people are willing to commit themselves to solving their own problems. And, finally, the establishment of the council is a statement in the belief that citizens must be heard and must become involved in the decision-making process of the community.

ROLE OF THE COUNCIL

Power and the Council

One of the most often asked questions by both the Community Education director and the advisory council member is "How much power does the advisory council have?" Generally what is meant by this question is "Can we make decisions? And, if we do make decisions, are they binding?"

Before we can answer the questions about power and its relation to councils, we need to have a theoretic understanding of power. There are six sources of power as defined by Raven and French in a report published by the Institute of Social Research (1959).

1. Reward power - the power that results from the belief that an individual or group controls the rewards that can only be gained by compliance with their wishes.

2. Coercive power - the power that results from the belief that an individual or group is able to punish or coerce others.

3. Expert power - the power that results from the belief that a person or group has "expert" knowledge or skills that can help us or be of profit to us.

4. Information power - the power that results from the belief that an individual or group has control of information that is important to us.

5. Legitimate power - the power that results from the belief that a person or group in a particular position has the "right" to ask and expect certain things from us.

6. Referent power - the power that results from like, respect or admiration of another person or group.

When we look at this list it is obvious that reward and coercive power have no place in Community Education. However the other four types of power have specific reference to Community Education and the advisory council. These types of power are available to advisory councils but they must be earned and practiced.

Expert power in a council comes about in two ways: individuals with existing knowledge and skill serve on the council, and council members, because of their focus and the amount of time they put in, develop expertise. In the same manner, information power is available to advisory councils. Because of their efforts in getting to know the community and how best to serve it, they are the holders of information that no other group has.

Legitimate and referent powers are powers that are delegated by an individual (the Community Education professional) or by a group (the school board). Legitimate power--the right to control or make decisions--is also limited power; the ultimate responsibility rests with the person or group who delegated the responsibility. Legitimate power is earned by a council when it has demonstrated its ability and effectiveness in making decisions or in performing certain tasks. For example, a council that has legitimized itself by sound decisions and effective performance in other tasks, could be asked to assume authority for a specific program such as chemical dependency or a school-related recreation program.

Referent power is given to the advisory council in an identical fashion. When the original holder of the power develops respect and confidence in the council and refers responsibilities to it, the council has earned a higher level of power. A council may show through performance that it has the information and expertise and also the respect of the community, and this impression of excellent performance may result in the director or the school board referring certain matters to the council for their attention or action.

The list of sources of power also holds a key to the question of the power of the Community Education advisory council. Although the discussion above alludes to this key, it may not be readily apparent. Each statement on sources of power includes the words, "results from the belief". We need to remember that power is based on belief. If we

believe people or groups have power, they do. For example, the school board has power as long as we believe it does. However, when for some reason the school board or individual members displease the community or act contrary to the wishes of the majority of the community, the belief is shattered and voters move to make a change. The change brought about by the voters in this instance does not affect the legitimate power of the school board, but the change does bring about a new board that will develop goals consistent with the wishes of the voters.

The other side of this coin that describes how belief affects power is the idea that if people believe you have power, you do. The four types of power listed above are examples of potential power of the council--if it chooses to develop and exercise them. When the belief and trust of the community, community agencies, the Community Education professional, or the school board are vested in the council, then, without question, the council will have power.

Now, returning to the original question of "How much power does the advisory council have, we can only answer in a number of ways which include, "none", "only that delegated to them", "only behind-the-scenes power", and "power that results from influence". Obviously, addressing the question of power leaves many questions about the role of the council unanswered.

The advisory council is advisory and by this definition the council does not have the authority to make decisions. In actuality, the council often does make decisions. Because councils do the leg work, study the community, identify needs and issues, talk with agency heads and take on many tasks, and because councils are made up of knowledgeable and experienced citizens, their recommended decisions often become the decisions that are acted upon by the community educator. Their decisions are also often supported by the school board. As the specific functions of the council are discussed later in the guidebook it will become even more clear what the advisory council role is. Certain functions, as we shall see, are jobs that are done almost entirely by the council acting in its own stead while others are jobs that are shared with the director or with other community groups.

A caution is appropriate. Even though the advisory council may play an important part in decisions that affect the community, council members must realize that obtaining and utilizing influence is a slow process. As with any type of power, influence should not be abused. Influence is a "power to" do something or change something and is not a "power over" anything or anybody.

Council Relationships

Much has been implied above about the relationship between the Community Education advisory council and those people and groups with whom it works--the community educator, the school administrator and the school board. We have learned that the relationship depends on two factors: how much trust is placed in the council and what is expected of the council, and also how much the council is deserving of trust and how much work is it willing to take on.

Relationship with the Director

The intensity or depth of the relationship between the Community Education professional and the council is situational. In some communities, the community educator is unwilling to let go of any of the work, any of the decision-making and any of the recognition. In other communities the community educator sincerely wants to work in partnership with the council, but the council is unwilling or not able to take on any of the real responsibility.

Neither situation is healthy. The dogmatic dictator-like community educator is "cutting off his (her) nose to spite his (her) face." By refusing to share responsibility, this community educator is not conducting a true Community Education program--he or she might just as well be running an education-for-profit private agency. While we definitely need trained and knowledgeable professionals to implement decisions and administer programs, we just as much need to know that Community Education programs and activities are based on needs identified by community members and determined to be important by advisory councils.

In the reverse situation in which the community educator is disappointed because the council does not "pull its fair share of the load," the program also suffers. The result is the same as with the power-hungry community educator. In this instance, the benevolent community educator is required to take up the slack, make decisions alone and do the best he or she can. And, of course, this situation results in a program that is not truly Community Education.

It is important that councils and Community Education administrators develop a positive working relationship. When this does not happen, it is generally because there is a misunderstanding of the roles and responsibilities of the other, the council lacks a purpose statement and goals and objectives, or two-way communication does not exist. Most of these problems can be overcome by training of both the director and the council in the roles and responsibilities of Community Education advisory councils. Quite often, the problem of a poor relationship is merely based on ignorance. When councils know what is expected of them and how far their responsibilities extend, they will have the courage to go beyond providing token support to the community educator. Similarly, when community educators learn or remember that fully functioning, truly representative councils are the hub of the Community Education wheel and that without them there is no Community Education, they will have the wisdom to share both the work and the praise.

Ideally, the relationship between the Community Education professional and the council should be clearly defined and well understood by both council members and the community educator. Councils that have problems with the relationship generally are unclear about their role and this role confusion is demonstrated in apathy, poor attendance at meetings, meetings without purpose, conflict with the director or coordinator, or by attempts on the part of the council to take over the professional's role. There is so much work that can be done in Community Education and the potential for creativity is so great, that it hardly behooves any of us to try and grab another's role. Obviously the answer is to take time to discuss and clarify roles and then to produce a written statement about the purpose and function of the council.

Relationships With K-12 Administrators and the School Board

The relationship between the advisory council and the K-12 administrators of the district and the school board, (which is alluded to in the discussion about power) is also situational. In some school districts the K-12 administrators work closely with the council; in others they give little indication that they know the council exists. Similarly, in some districts the school board has close ties with the Community Education advisory council and in others the board hears about Community Education only at budget decision time.

Councils should strive to develop positive and close relationships with both K-12 administrators and the school board. Councils should include representation from the school administrative staff, and these administrators should serve as regular council members, not as ex officio members. Because Community Education is dedicated to improving communities through educational endeavors that serve all age groups--including school age children--it is logical that school administrators bring the needs of the K-12 program and the perspective of the K-12 program to the forum in which the community and the school interact. As a single voting member, the superintendent or principal has the same power or authority as any other member and his or her contribution or knowledge is valued no more or no less than that of any other member. If the representative of the administrative staff serves in an ex officio capacity, equality of authority will not exist. In this role, the administrator often acts as the authority or the supplicant, and such a position is not consistent with a concept that gives equal voice to all segments of the community.

Obviously, the K-12 administrator, when serving in his or her official capacity away from the council meeting, has a good deal of legitimate power that must be respected by the council. By establishing good rapport within the council meeting, the council generally can bank on a supportive response from the administrator. If there is disagreement on policy or direction, the council will have had the opportunity to hear the reasoning and to decide to either support or not support the position of the administrator.

Community Education advisory councils rarely include a member from the school board, and this, in the opinion of the writer, is a mistake. Even when there is school board representation, the school board person serves as a liaison or as an ex officio member. Because Community Education provides for the educational needs of the total community and because it reports to the school board, either directly or through the Community Education director or the superintendent, it is critical that the board know of, and take part in, the recommendations and decisions of the advisory council.

It it appears to be politically unwise to include a board member as a voting member of the council, then the ex officio or liaison status provides the next best method for communication. If the school board is not interested in establishing such a relationship, a different tactic will have to be taken. The entire school board should be made aware not only of the programs and costs of Community Education, but also of the concept and its underlying philosophy. So much that Community Education does has a direct impact on the school. When Community Education addresses adult illiteracy, crime, chemical dependency, unemployment, health needs and the like, the effect on school age children can be dramatic. If, for example, Community Education becomes involved in attempting to prevent pre-birth or birth related defects, the net result five years later has a direct effect on the school. Thousands of dollars potentially could be saved by such action and the real involvement of the school board at this point in time could provide the go-ahead for a very needed project.

We recognize that in many communities it will be impossible, at least initially, to establish a close working relationship with the school board. However, this fact should not keep the advisory council from making every attempt to keep the school board members informed. Meeting agendas and and reports should be sent to each board member. Council members should consider attending the School Board meeting to create visibility and to demonstrate interest.

Finally, councils must keep in mind that the school board is the policy making board of the school district. School boards have legitimately bestowed power to make decisions which govern the operation of the schools in the

district. Community Education councils--or any other group--cannot diminish or take over the power of the school board. However, referring again to our theoretical discussion of power, we will remember that the council can influence the school board and can receive delegated power from the board. Therefore, initiating or maintaining a carefully planned and thoughtfully executed method for building a positive relationship with the school board is imperative.

Relationship With the Community

The relationship between the advisory council and the community is determined by two factors: the type of representative system by which the council operates and how the council perceives its role and acts within its role.

Councils that are formed with representation from specific groups may relate primarily to those groups with which they are affiliated. On the other hand, councils that are formed with representation from the general community will relate (perhaps) to those segments of the population from which they come.

If the council perceives its role as being the bridge between the community and Community Education, then it will attempt to represent, as best it can, the views of the entire community.

Serving as a representative of a group or a defined category of the community population--senior citizen, parent and so on--is a challenging task for the council member if the responsibility is taken seriously. Each council member owes Community Education the benefit of the thinking, desires, and opinions of the group or population he or she represents. In order to bring the correct message or information to the council from one's constituents, the council member must talk with and listen to those whom he or she represents. And, in turn, the member must bring the thinking and decisions of the council back to his or her constituents. If this transfer of information does not take place, the council is in actuality made up of individuals who represent only themselves. To believe otherwise makes no sense. In a society in which most individuals consider themselves unique, it is not realistic to believe that one pre-school parent is representative of all pre-school parents or that the beliefs of one governmental

representative are the beliefs of all government officials. Even when council members make sincere efforts to transmit the views of those they represent, they tend to filter--as all humans tend to filter--the views of others through their own system of values and beliefs. Even with the best intentions council members bring biased views to the council and therefore, they should be encouraged to take their representative role very seriously.

It should be emphasized that councils should represent the entire community and that council members should seek the greater goal of what's best for the community first and only secondly represent the views of the group from which they come. Because one is a senior citizen or a minister or a pre-school parent one's perception will automatically be skewed. It is essential for council members to constantly remind themselves of this fact so that the council doesn't become a battlefield for competing interests with no overarching goal of what's best for the community.

COUNCIL ORGANIZATION

Each Community Education advisory council has individual characteristics which distinquish it from other district councils and from Community Education councils in other districts. The uniqueness of each advisory council occurs because each community or school district determines the system that will serve it best. Questions about the type of council, representation and organizational structures are questions to be answered locally. The following information may help the local community determine how its Community Education advisory council should be set up and organized.

Determining the Council Framework

School district policies, council by-laws and council purpose statements provide the legal and structural guidelines that allow the council to function effectively. However, before policies, by-laws and purpose statements can be written, certain decisions must be made. The first decision has to do with the type of structure of the council.

For many years the concept of Community Education stressed one type of council--the neighborhood community school council. This type of council remains prevalent today, but other councils have been developed to meet particular needs of communities.

The Neighborhood Council

The neighborhood council is composed of people who live or work in a certain neighborhood which is served by a public school. This council is generally made up of citizens rather

than agency representatives, although agency people may be included either as residents or because the agency is located within the community. Broad representation of all segments of the community is sought including school administrators and teachers, senior citizens, parents, adults without children in the schools and so on. because our communities tend to be somewhat homogeneous, the local council will be more homogeneous than one which serves an entire school district. As long as full representation of each identified group in the community exists, similarities in background or focus are no real problem because the neighborhood council handles issues and problems relevant to its neighborhood.

The District-wide Council

A council that represents the entire school district may be organized either in a district which has, or does not have neighborhood Community Education advisory councils. Generally, the system-wide council consists of representatives from the whole school district and deals with issues affecting the total district.

Three different types of district-wide councils exist and the differences result from the representative method which is chosen. In a district in which each school has its own Community Education advisory council, a district-wide coordinating council may be established. One or more representatives from each neighborhood council serve on the council. The purpose of a district-wide council which is organized in this fashion is to provide communication between the separate councils and to create a forum to discuss problems that transcend the boundaries of the individual neighborhoods.

Some district-wide councils are broader based than the coordinating council. They include representatives from the individual councils and, in addition include general representation from agencies and organizations and identified categories of people such as parents or senior citizens.

In school districts in which the individual schools do not have separate councils, the district councils provide advice for the total Community Education program. These councils generally include representatives from designated geographical areas within the district in addition to the members that represent agencies, organizations and identified categories of people.

The changes in society since the Community Education concept was first formulated have brought about changes in the council. Because of declining financial resources, many school buildings which formerly had an on-site community educator continue to serve as the facility through which classes and programs are offered, but do so without a resident coordinator or advisory council. While such a system is not ideal, it may be the only answer to providing programs within neighborhoods--at least the local school remains a focus of neighborhood interest.

Another factor that contributes to the demise of the local council, particularly in large urban areas, is the fragmentation of neighborhoods brought about by busing, educational options and magnet schools. The original purpose of improving schools by improving communities through Community Education becomes less meaningful when the children do not attend school in their own immediate community. However, because the same human needs and social issues are found in all communities, individual communities can be well served even in a system in which there is centralized program decision making and in which a single district-wide council addresses the needs of the total community. Councils which must serve this broader perspective of community needs and interests must be aware that their actions have effects on the small neighborhoods of the district. They must make every effort to secure broad representation and, in addition, they must develop sound methods to communicate with the residents in each separate community.

Council Representation and Selection

The topics of council representation and selection are joined in this section because the type of representation may influence the method of selection. However, before selection processes can be considered the council must determine its representation.

In the preceding parts of this guidebook many statements have been made about the need for broad based representation from all parts of the community. Careful consideration must

be given when determining how to secure a council that is truly representative of the community. In Minnesota, the council representation is clearly spelled out by law (see page 12). However, even if each community followed the letter of the law, certain groups in the community could be overlooked.

In addition to the broad categories suggested, we need to look at other factors that define the community. Communities are made up of people who differ in age, sex, race, religion, socio-economic status and residential or geographic areas. When organizing a council, people who represent these differences should be included as part of, or in addition to the categories suggested by the Minnesota law.

Many councils develop a list of the types of representatives that will provide a cross-section of their community. Before developing the list they make a demographic study of the community to ascertain that all groups--both visible and invisible--are identified. In most cases the list is flexible, for example, a representative from a church group might also be a parent and will bring both perspectives to the council.

Some of the groups which might be considered for representation on the council include:

* schools
* parents
* social service agencies
* recreation agencies
* government
* business
* youth
* adults
* older adults
* civic organizations
* special interest groups

By combining the demographic information with the list of groups (either mentally or by developing a matrix) the council will be able to determine categories for membership and will be able to check where gaps in representation exist.

When the representation of the Community Education advisory council has been determined, attention is then directed to the selection process. Advisory council members can be selected in a variety of ways.

1. Volunteer/Appointment
   A person who is interested in Community Education indicates a desire to serve on the council. He or she is then appointed to the council.

2. Recruitment/Appointment
   The director and/or council seek out the potential advisory council member and encourage him or her to join the council. He or she is then appointed to the council.

3. Election
   Neighborhood schools or other designated geographical sites hold elections for council membership. The winning candidate serves on the council.

4. Agency Appointment
   Each agency or group to be represented on the council selects a person from the group to serve on the Community Education advisory council.

5. Agency Election
   Each agency or group to be represented on the council holds an internal election to determine who will serve as the agency's representative on the advisory council.

6. Agency Volunteer
   Each agency or group to be represented on the council asks a member to volunteer to serve on the Community Education advisory council.

Councils may use a combination of methods to secure representation from a cross-section of the community. Enthusiastic, hard-working members can be obtained by any of the methods of selection. There are some cautions, however:

1. A volunteer from the community may be excellent or may be a person with a single interest or an axe to grind.

2. The person who is sought out or recruited may be excellent, or may be a person who is over-committed or who is serving because he or she couldn't say "no".

3. The elected member may be excellent, or may be a person elected by a small electorate voting for a vested interest.

4. The person appointed by an agency or group may be excellent, or may just be doing what he or she has been told to do.

5. The person elected by an agency or group may be excellent, or he or she may just be well-liked and popular.

6. The person who volunteers from an agency or group may be excellent, or may just be a "joiner".

Perhaps the most successful method of selection and the one that will come the closest to guaranteeing representation of all segments of the community is a method that combines more than one of the selection procedures. If, for example, agencies and groups select or elect a representative to the council and this results in poor geographic representation. area elections can be held or members may be recruited from the geographic area. If the council consists primarily of lay citizens, efforts can be made to encourage agencies to appoint a representative to serve on the council. The principle which must be kept in mind is that the council should be a miniature of the community so that all voices can be heard.

Councils function best when they have a formula for representation and selection of members. The formula that works best allows for flexibility: when groups or categories are identified as those which should provide representatives, after it is determined to recruit lay members who represent certain categories of people in the communities, a few membership spots may be left open for the council to appoint at-large members. Any unrepresented group can then be represented by an at-large appointment.

Size of the Council

The size of the council is another important matter to be determined before by-laws and guidelines can be written. Each community or each council must decide what size works best for its particular needs. The number of members on each advisory council varies depending on the size of the population, how heterogenous the population is, and on the scope of Community Education in the district.

Research on group size can offer some insights, however the overarching consideration is that the community be well represented. Groups are perhaps most effective with 15-20 members. Some advisory councils function with as few as six or as many as 50 members. The number of people on the advisory council should be large enough to be representative and small enough to be workable. One would question a council of only six people. On the other hand, a 50 member council would undoubtedly provide much duplication and overlap of membership.

Although the by-laws should include a section on council size, the section should be written to provide flexibility. The number of people who serve on the advisory council need not be constant. Membership size can change as the community changes and, as discussed above, a varying number of at-large membership positions can provide the elasticity needed to assure total community representation. Rather than identifying or requiring a set number of people, the council should through its by-laws, set a minimum and maximum number of members. The reasons for such thinking should be apparent: limiting the size can be a barrier to good cross-sectional representation whereas to allow all comers could result in chaos.

Terms of Office

The term of office of the members should also be outlined in the by-laws. In some councils, members seem to serve in perpetuity. This system has the advantage of having dedicated, loyal and knowledgeable people at the helm. It

can also mean entrenchment, a closing out of new ideas, and an impression of being an elitist club. In other councils--those who have not yet built a reputation for being a coveted community service organization--members are begged to serve "just for this year" and, as a result, there is little history, little continuity and little forward direction.

Again, the character of the community and its Community Education program determines what is best for the individual council. However, some system should be devised in which experienced members who carry a history of the council can be joined by new members who, while novices, are sincerely dedicated to bringing about positive community change through Community Education.

One way to accomplish having such a system is to determine that members will serve three year terms. Generally, the first year will be a learning year and the other two will be years in which the member brings not only his or her original qualifications to the council but also can share the history and experience of the council with newer members. Councils which have operated under another system may find it difficult to initiate such a system, even when they recognize the wisdom of doing so. The system may be started by determing--perhaps by straw vote--that one-third of the members will retire at the end of the first year, another third will serve for two years, and the final third will serve the entire three years.

As in the other areas discussed in this section, flexibility based on community needs must be the determining factor. If the council is made up of agency representatives who can or will serve only one year, then council continuity must be provided for in some other way--perhaps by having a core of other members who serve longer terms.

The important factor in term of membership is to specify the terms of office as clearly as possible in the by-laws or council guidelines. If potential members know how long they will be serving on the council, they will know and understand the time commitment they must make.

Number and Length of Meetings

The number of advisory council meetings each year should be specified in the by-laws. Because by-laws act as the guiding force, enumerating the meetings assures that regular meetings will be held. Also, members will know of the time commitment they are required to make if the number of meetings are specified.

Minnesota state law requires that Community Education advisory councils meet a minimum of four times a year. Obviously, a council that gathers only four times a year will not be a very effective council, however this minimum does prevent a perfunctory once-a-year, rubber-stamp council.

Effective advisory councils meet at least monthly. Occasionally, councils that meet monthly also fall into the category of token councils because the meetings last such a short time that all that happens is a report from the community educator on his or her activities during the past month. Meetings of one hour are not sufficiently long to gather the input needed for goal setting, council direction, or community problem solving. Meetings over two-and-a-half hours long discourage attendance.

If the council is organized so that an executive committee, task forces or committees are part of the structure, members should be advised of the additional time commitment required. Although the time required for these assignments are not specifically part of the by-laws or council guidelines, the executive committee and all other committees should be designated in the by-laws or guidelines.

Officers and the Executive Committee

The Community Education advisory council generally operates with two or three officers. These officers, the chairperson, chairperson-elect (possibly), and the secretary comprise the total or core of the executive committee. Each of these elected or appointed officers performs a particular role on the council and brings the information that pertains to this role to the executive committee.

The Chairperson

The chairperson is a critical member of the council but serves less as a member than as a facilitator of the process. Ideally, the chairperson is elected by fellow council members; occasionally the chairperson--particularly in a new council--must be appointed or even coerced to serve. Although the chairperson's role is crucial, the duties are not overwhelming. However, each chairperson is entitled to receive an explanation of duties and responsibilities and to receive whatever training he or she needs to serve in the role.

Some of the responsibilities of the chairperson are:

* to prepare the agenda in cooperation with the community educator
* to convene the meetings
* to preside at meetings
* to facilitate group discussion
* to assign tasks to committees
* to review minutes
* to make appointments to fill council vacancies
* to monitor council performance
* to work closely with the community educator in matters that relate to the council
* to make presentations to the school board, if requested
* to serve on the executive committee

The Vice-chairperson

Many councils function with only a chairperson and a secretary. However, this writer strongly recommends that the position of chairperson-elect or vice-chairperson be created.

Two primary reasons exist for this recommendation: two people sharing the workload make both jobs more palatable, and a year spent in understanding the system provides both for continuity and for experience in leadership. Some of the tasks that can be assumed by the chairperson-elect or vice-chair (whichever term is used) are:

* to participate in preparing the meeting agenda
* to preside over meetings in the absence of the chairperson
* to monitor committee operations
* to make presentations to the school board and other community organizations
* to serve on the executive committee

The Secretary

The third important position on the council is that of secretary. This position is--and should be perceived as--an extremely important position which requires dedication, skill, and knowledge and which also is a stepping stone to further leadership. Although it seems somewhat unnecessary to make the following statement, it must be made. The secretary's position is not one automatically assumed by a female. The skills needed and the opportunity for leadership training should make the secretary's job attractive to any council member. (Obviously, the same comments apply to the positions of chairperson and chairperson-elect.)

The responsibilities of secretary are:

* to keep the minutes of the meeting
* to serve as recorder for the meeting (to outline major points on a blackboard or newsprint paper)
* to serve as liaison to specified committees
* to serve as council correspondent
* to serve on the executive committee

The Executive Committee

An executive committee may be a novel idea to some Community Education advisory councils. However, the establishment of an executive committee--in a neighborhood council, in a small or large district-wide council, or in any other council of few or many members--assures that the council and the Community Education program work in concert to provide for the community needs and interests.

Executive committees serve many functions. They:

* provide for a broad-based agenda
* afford presentation of carefully worded action items to the council
* establish accurate communication between the community educator and the council
* allow for action in the interim between council meetings

The membership on the executive committee need not be static and it can include membership other than the officers. The size of the committee is determined by many factors: the regularity of the meetings, the number of officers, the responsibilities assigned to the committee, the complexity of the committee organization and so on. As previously discussed the three officers serve on the committee. In addition, the community education professional serves on the committee, either officially or ex officially. Other possible members of the executive committee could be the immediate past-chairperson, a representative from the school administrative team, or members elected or selected from the council.

The executive committee is not intended to be a second (or more important) council. It is designed to aid, benefit and add to the performance of the council. The executive committee does not take on the duties or responsibilities of the advisory council; however, depending on each situation, it may be called upon to act in the stead of the council.

Advisory Council Committees

Except in very small communities with very small advisory councils, much of the community involvement activity of the council takes place in the committees that report to the council. The committees are of two basic types: standing committees and ad hoc committees.

Standing committees are part of the formal organization of the advisory council. These committees are identified in the by-laws and they exist from year to year. Each standing committee has a specific responsibility and this responsibility is written either in a formal purpose statement or in the council guidelines. Some of the more common standing committees of Community Education advisory councils are:

* executive committee
* nominations
* finance
* long-range planning
* recognition
* public relations
* inter-agency
* evaluation

Ad hoc committees are special committees set up to perform a specific task. When the task is completed the ad hoc committee is disbanded. The purposes of ad hoc committees are so varied that a listing is impossible. However, ad hoc committees can be organized for such activities as needs assessments, community fairs and expositions and special projects such as chemical dependency workshops or health awareness programs.

A committee system allows many community members, in addition to the council members, to take an active part in Community Education. People from the community are often willing to serve on a committee because the committee addresses some concern that is of particular interest to them. Ad hoc committees are especially attractive to people who want to participate in a specific activity or who want to serve only for a short peiod of time. Councils should make strong efforts to encourage general community membership on their committees. Not only is membership on a committee a sure way of developing support for Community Education, it also provides many opportunities for leadership development that is a benefit both to Community Education and to the entire community.

If the emerging leadership is to grow and develop, councils must listen to and respect their committees. A major reason that interest in serving on committees dwindles is that the council chooses to ignore the recommendations of the committee that are based on research and hard work. While councils should not rubber stamp recommendations that come from their committees, neither should they decide that because they are

the overseeing body, they have wisdom beyond that of the committee. To overcome this sometimes bad habit of councils, councils should make serious efforts to inform themselves of the reasoning behind the committee recommendations.

Because the committees report to the council it is imperative that good communication exists between them and the council. In many councils, a council member chairs the committee. In others, a council member serves as a liaison between the council and the committee. Either system provides for the exchange of information that is necessary for good communication and for positive relations.

An additional way to ensure effective communication between the council and its committees is for the council to refer matters to the committee in written form. By doing this, there is little opportunity for misunderstanding. The written directive to the committee should describe what the committee is to do and should include a deadline for completion of the task. Similarly, when the task is completed the request for action or approval should be sent to the advisory council in writing. Utilizing a method that consists of a council member's attendance at each committee meeting and a requirement of communication in writing will guarantee clarity of understanding and thus better working relations.

COUNCIL BY-LAWS

It is essential that the council roles, purpose and structure be formalized in written form. The most common and most effective method of providing organization and structure for the council is through by-laws.

By-laws serve as the constitution of Community Education advisory councils. Like a constitution they provide the framework that allows the council to function effectively. And, like a constitution, by-laws should contain some flexibility--either in provisions for making amendments or in language that can be broadly interpreted--so that the council will not be immobilized by its own by-laws.

By-laws incorporate all of the material which has been discussed in the section of the guidebook on council structure. The following outline may be useful as a model when developing by-laws.

BY-LAWS

Article I

Name of Advisory Council

The official name of the advisory council should be clearly stated.

Article II

Purpose and Functions

This article is extremely important. Both the general purpose and the specific functions of the council should be outlined. Because the purpose and functions are developed by each council, they will vary from council to council. (See discussion of council functions, pages 39 to 50.)

Article III

Representation and Membership

When the council has determined who should serve on the council, it should include this information. This article should allow flexibility in representation so that community groups that are not represented can be included.

Article IV

Selection Procedure

Procedures that will result in selection of the agreed upon representation should be described. The selection procedures may include a combination of election, volunteerment and appointment.

Article V

Terms of Office

The specific terms of office should be described. If a rotation system is used, the method by which it operates should be spelled out. This article should also include rules for replacement of members who have resigned.

Article VI

Meetings

Provisions for regular meetings should be included. This article should specify when the council meets and the time of the meetings. This article should also specify quorum requirements for council meetings.

Article VII

Officers

The duties, responsibilities, terms and methods of selecting officers should be clearly stated. This article should also include rules for replacement of officers who have resigned.

Article VIII

Committees

Provisions and guidelines for committees should be delineated. Each standing committee should be identified and the method for establishing ad hoc committees should be described. The duties and responsibilities of committees should be outlined in this article.

Article IX

Amendments

This article describes the mechanism for making changes in the by-laws. Methods for proposing amendments and voting requirements should be included.

ADVISORY COUNCIL FUNCTIONS

One of the most common questions asked by advisory council members is "What is our function?" Hours of discussion often go into that question every year. It seems to never get answered. Just when a council thinks that the answer is clear, new members arrive on the council and the question arises once again.

The question of function is an exceedingly important one and one that can and should be answered. If councils are to operate effectively, all members must be clear as to their function. However, because each community is different, each council will be different and the tasks that they perform will, likewise, vary from community to community.

There are, however, ten major functions that most councils perform. These ten major functions, in no particular order, are:

Planning
Needs/resources assessment
Program development
Public relations
Finance
Inter-agency cooperation
Problem solving
Influencing policies
Evaluation
Training

All of these functions are part of the primary purpose of the advisory council which is to provide guidance and leadership for Community Education. If a council is truly

representative of the community, and if the council works at each of these ten functions, then Community Education is well on the way to success in that community.

Before turning to each of these functions for a more in-depth look at the meaning of each, a few comments are in order concerning an eleventh function that often seems to take precedence over the other ten. The function of which we are speaking is the worker function.

It must be emphasized that the primary purpose of an advisory council is not--emphasize not--to provide free labor to the Community Education program. Granted, there will be times when there may be a worker function to be played by some council members (i.e. stapling, folding, stuffing, supervising, selling). It is important that this be an occasional and a very secondary function because if the council has been carefully recruited, utilizing the council primarily for such tasks would be a great under-utilization of talents.

To effectively utilize the council's talents, the tasks must be meaningful and important. That is what the ten major functions of councils really are--meaningful and important.

Planning

This function should be one of the highest priorities for a council. It has been said that if you don't know where you're going, you can't be lost. While there may be some truth in this, it is equally as true that you'll probably end up somewhere elese.

What this little saying conveys is that councils often don't know where they're going and that at some point the council members may find Community Education somewhere other than where they thought it was going.

The first task then in the planning function is to establish a three to five year plan for Community Education. This plan establishes a framework for the development of annual plans which is the second major task. Once it is clear where

Community Education is headed during the next three to five years it is much easier for the council to establish annual goals and objectives which will help move Community Education to the point that the council sees three to five years hence.

The planning function is vital to an effective Community Education operation. The long range plan, as well as the annual plans, should be developed in harmony with the school district goals as well as with the Community Education director's goals. All three sets of goals should complement one another.

With this broad framework established and with annual goals and objectives, a council is well on the way to getting where they want to be in three to five years.

It should be noted that this planning, both short and long range, is a framework. It is not "cast in concrete". It must always remain flexible so that goals and objectives can change as the need arises.*

Needs/Resources Assessment

Planning as a function of the advisory council, can only be as good as the data used for the planning. To insure the best possible planning, councils need to be involved in the assessment of both community needs and community resources.

Community Education is the process through which community needs, interests, concerns and problems are identified and in which community resources are used, or are developed, to meet the needs, serve the interests, address the concerns and solve the problems of the community. Because advisory councils

*For a more in-depth discussion of the planning process in Community Education, see Martha L. Stanley, Charting Your Course, a Guidebook for Community Education Planning, The Community Education Center, College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota 55105.

provide the hub of Community Education, they must know the needs and interests of the community as well as the community resources available that potentially could be brought to bear on the identified needs and interests.

It is not the intent of this section to indicate how to carry out a community assessment. That has already been done.* It is the intent, however, to stress the importance of the council being involved in performing the function because the success or failure of the assessment process affects many of the other functions of the council.

Program Development

A third important function of the advisory council, and one that is heavily dependent of the assessment function, is program development. An advisory council is responsible for seeing that the Community Education program is a well balanced program. Too often, councils abdicate this function to the Community Education administrator and become nothing more than rubber-stamps for the program of the administrator. This is an error to be avoided. No administrator, no matter how well trained can know all of the needs of the community and then plan a program to effectively meet these needs.

Councils must assume the lead in analyzing the existing programs within the community and then must develop programs to fill in the gaps. They must determine which programs are unnecessarily duplicative and drop them, and must identify programs that can and should be spun off to other organizations and agencies that are qualified to maintain them.

*For an in-depth look at the community assessment process in Community Education, see Martha L. Stanley, Knowing Your Community, A Guidebook for Community Assessment, The Community Education Center, College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota, 55105.

A council should strive for a balanced program with the needs--all types of needs--educational, recreational, social, cultural, health and so on--of all individuals--early childhood through senior citizens--being met. A balance implies not only adding new programs as the need arises but deleting programs to maintain that balance. Often councils have difficulty giving up programs. It is natural to desire to hold on to that which we have. However, if the goal of community self-actualization--helping the community become all that it can be--is constantly kept in mind as councils perform their program development function then the council will actively seek ways to strengthen others in the community so that they might be able to maintain programs without Community Education.

A note should be made on the issue of duplication of programs. The statement was made above that unnecessarily duplicative programs should be dropped. The key word is "unnecessarily". All duplication is not bad. Duplication of programs which meet the same need of different groups is not something to be avoided. Duplication of programs which meet the same need of the same groups is something to be avoided. Councils must always be aware of the needs in their community and then ask themselves "Are we the organization best able to meet this need or could someone else do it better?" If the answer to this questions is "Yes, we are best able", then Community Education should provide the program. If the answer is "No, we are not best able", then Community Education should refer that need to the agency which is better able to meet it.

As a general rule, this writer believes that the school should be the programmer of last resort. Community Education should help strengthen existing groups to do their jobs better and only when there is no existing agency or organization that can meet the need as effectively should Community Education assume the responsibility for providing that program.

Public Relations

Community Education isn't very useful unless the community knows about it. Therefore, an advisory council has a very important part to play in the area of public relations. A council must develop and maintain lines of communication between the community and the school in order for Community Education to succeed--and developing communication is a major part of public relation.

Public relations is not the Madison Avenue slick selling approach that is often seen. It is a two-way communication process designed for the purposes of keeping the community informed, listening to the concerns of the community and attempting, by honestly informing and listening, to increase the community's confidence in, and support of, Community Education.

Advisory councils must clearly indentify the publics with whom they need and want to communicate. These publics should include all groups within the entire community. The council must then determine how best to communicate with these publics. Both mass media and interpersonal communication methods should be used. Obviously, inter-personal communications are going to be much more successful in changing attitudes than will be mass media techniques. Mass media techniques will be more successful to simply provide information. A public relations plan should be part of the entire planning process discussed earlier.

It is important to keep in mind that there are many ways in which councils can develop an open communication system with the community.* Councils should attempt to select the best methods for communicating with their publics.

Some of the methods include:

Listening and talking to community members--let them know you serve on the advisory council

Publicizing your council meetings and encouraging attendance and participation in them

Sponsoring public forums and debates on key issues

Distributing studies and reports

Attending meetings of other community agencies and organizations

Utilizing radio, television, newspapers, newsletters and brochures

*For an in-depth look at public relations in Community Education see Martha L. Stanley, Carrying the Message, A Guidebook for Community Education Public Relations, The Community Education Center, College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota, 55105.

A good flow of communication is the key to council public relations efforts because as communication increases so does the knowledge of community needs and resources. Also through effective communication, the community gains a better understanding of the roles, functions and potential of Community Education. When the public understands what the council is trying to accomplish through Community Education, support for, and participation in, Community Education increases.

Finance

Probably one of the least understood and least performed functions of advisory councils is that of finance. The council's first responsibility in the finance area is to understand budgets! The state of Minnesota, for example, mandates that the Community Education advisory council advise the school board on Community Education budget matters. How can anyone advise on something they don't understand? Obviously they can't. Therefore, it behooves the advisory council to learn about the budgeting process and how to understand tax levies, state aids, other revenues, all classes of expenditures and budgets in general.

With a good understanding of budgets the council can and should expand its area of responsibility by actively participating in the budget development process. A budget should be a financial picture of the Community Education program. If the council is actively involved in planning the immediate and long range direction, and if the council is actively involved in program development, it stands to reason that they must be involved in the budget development process as well. The importance of this should be obvious--where the money is spent clearly indicates where the priorities are for any program. Directions and dollars are closely tied together.

If the council understands Community Education finance and has been actively involved in the budget development process, a third area of responsibility--selling the budget--then comes into play. This responsibility is connected to the public relations function previously discussed. Once a budget has been developed the council should support the budget and actively seek the support of the school board for the budget. Advisory councils have two additional responsibilities related to the financial operation of Community Education. One is to advise on the fees to be charged for the various activities

and programs. If the council is intimately involved in assessing community needs, and if they have provided a good communication system with the community, then they should be in an excellent position to provide sound advice concerning the appropriate fees that could and should be charged.

The other financial responsibility of councils is fund raising. If the council identifies needs that must be met, they also must see that the financial support necessary to fund the needed programs is available. Councils can become involved in writing funding proposals, seeking funding sources (foundations, corporations, and so on), operating fund raisers (community fairs, pancake breakfasts, raffles) and other activities to gain the needed financial support.*

Inter-agency Cooperation

In the discussion of program development it was stated that Community Education should help strengthen and support other groups. In order to best meet the needs of the community, councils must cooperate and coordinate their efforts with other organizations, groups and agencies in the community. Several important benefits can result from inter-agency cooperation. Four of the most important benefits are:

* Avoiding unnecessary duplication
* Maximizing community resources
* Increased needs assessment
* Increasing the potential for community problem solving

*For an in-depth discussion of Community Education finance, see Martha L. Stanley Dealing with Dollars, A Guidebook for Community Education Financing, The Community Education Center, College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota 55105.

Through the close cooperation among community groups (by the creation of a coordinating council or by communication efforts) unnecessary duplication can be eliminated and avoided. Such efforts thus allow a maximum use of community resources. It provides for the identification of community needs from a variety of perspectives while at the same time creating an environment where each agency or organization can identify how it can help meet the need. This then increases the potential for community problem solving because many views are brought to bear on the problem. Thus, a problem that one agency recognized but could not solve alone now has a higher likelihood of being solved.

The advisory council has the responsibility to lead the way in developing inter-agency cooperation. Because members are from the community, they should be aware of the many agencies. Because of their experience in needs and resources assessment they have the capability of increased knowledge in this area. Knowledge is power and because councils have the knowledge and information they can have a strong influence on community agencies. They can see that the agencies are aware of and involved in the appropriate issues and can encourage them to take part in joint planning. Other benefits that can result from inter-agency cooperation include joint advertising, sharing of resources and total community needs assessment.

Problem Solving

An often neglected function of advisory councils is that of problem solving. This writer firmly believes that the advisory council must take an activist role in solving problems. The council must structure its meetings so that real problems are dealt with. Too often hours are spent on meaningless issues and moot points and no time is set aside for discussing critical issues in the community. It must be remembered that a major function of the council is to tackle community problems head on.

Working with other groups on community concerns is one method for dealing with problems. Just as important, however, is the council dealing with appropriate problems itself. This is best done through an eight step process.

1. State the problem. Define the problem so that it is understood.

2. Clarify the problem. Keep restating the problem to keep it clearly in front of the council.

3. Develop alternatives. Encourage the development of many alternatives.

4. Discuss each alternative. Concentrate the discussion so that each alternative is carefully considered.

5. Summarize the discussion. Summarize the results of the discussion of the alternatives.

6. Test the tentative choice. Look at the choice in terms of feasibility, cost and congruence with council goals.

7. Test council members commitment. Make sure that they agree this is a good solution.

8. Get a consensus. Make sure that each council member will take responsibility for the group's decision and that each is willing to support it.

If this function stands near the top of council functions, councils will not be stuck in a rut; they will be operating at full capacity and community problems will be getting solved.

Influencing Policies

Influencing policies is the eighth major function of advisory councils. If councils effectively perform the other functions thus far considered, they should have a wealth of

information and knowledge to bring to bear on community concerns. Part of the council's responsibility relating to the problem solving function will be to influence policies. The policies may be school district policies being considered by the board of education, city policies being considered by the city council, township or county policies being considered by township or county commissioners, state policies being considered by state boards or legislators, or national policies being considered by national organizations or congress.

If the advisory council has the facts needed to support or to disprove a policy that will affect the community they must actively work to get data to the appropriate decision-makers. Often council members see this function as a lobbying process and in many ways it is. Lobbying is merely a method of presenting information that will influence decision-makers. Councils should feel compelled to make their information known to the decision-makers who greatly appreciate having all of the available information to help them make the best possible decision.

Evaluation

People often shy away from anything that is associated with the term "evaluation" because evaluation seems to carry a negative connotation. Evaluation appears to be a mystical or super sophisticated process to many others and they too avoid it. As a result, councils tend not to exercise their evaluation function. Yet, evaluation is an imperative function with which advisory councils should be involved.

Evaluation, as a council function, is integrated with many of the other functions previously discussed. Planning is of little value if there is no evaluation of the progress being made in the identified goals and objectives. Needs assessment is meaningless without some evaluation. Program development may as well be done in a vacuum unless there is an evaluation component built into the entire process. The same comments could be made about all of the other council functions as well. Without evaluation the council very well might end up somewhere other than where they planned.

Councils should evaluate many facets of Community Education. They need to determine if the programs are meeting the identified needs of the community. They need to know if the staff members are fulfilling their defined responsibilities. And, councils need to evaluate themselves and their activities to determine if their meetings are effective and if the council goals are being achieved.

Evaluation is nothing more than collecting data to help a council make decisions. If a council, in the planning process, clearly spells out the goals and objectives that it hopes to achieve both for itself and for the Community Education program then evaluation becomes a manageable function. Furthermore as part of the long range plan, councils should plan to evaluate every component of the operation during the three to five year period in the long range plan. (Specific ideas concerning advisory council meeting evaluation follow in the Council Meeting section of this guidebook.)

Training

Last, but by no means any less important than the other nine council functions, is training. Each council, like each member of the community, is responsible for its own growth. It should be obvious, as these ten council functions are reviewed, that no council member is going to be fully knowledgeable and skilled in all of the areas when he or she joins the council. Abraham Maslow once wrote, "If the only tool you have is a hammer you tend to treat everything like a nail." In order for councils to deal effectively with each of these ten functions, they must constantly be seeking new "tools" (ideas, skills, concepts, knowledge) which will make them better able to meet the many challenges which confront them.

Councils must see that they obtain constant inservice training. Too often, councils are simply brought together with the expectation that they know how to function effectively; however, it is a rare council that has innate strengths in problem-solving, decision making, group dynamics, and all the other skills needed for effective council operation.

In addition to formal inservice for councils, which will be discussed in the next section, there are many other ways in which councils can increase their number of "tools". A few techniques to be considered include:

* Attending Community Education conferences

* Attending Community Education workshops and seminars

* Showing Community Education films and film strips

* Visiting other Community Education sites and councils

* Sharing Community Education books, pamphlets and magazines

* Joining the state and national Community Education associations

* Forming groups to study council functions

* Inviting other community educators in to council meetings

Advisory councils should demonstrate the message they are promoting, namely, life-long learning. Communities are more in need of models than they are of critics. Therefore, it is important that councils constantly provide ongoing training and growth opportunities for themselves as well as for the community.

As a council plans its year, various types of learning opportunities should be included in the plan. New members will need an understanding of Community Education, as well as an understanding of their responsibilities as members. Officers may need training to perform their duties and to effectively and efficiently run meetings. Committee members may need skills to help them carry out their tasks. These as well as other training needs must be identified and built into the annual plan for the development of Community Education.

Training for council members is vital. Members need understanding, a sense of direction, and skills if they are to accomplish their goals. Commitment is not enough. It takes much longer for council members to perform well if they must learn mainly from trial-and-error. Too often, council members begin to become effective members about the time that their term of office expires. This constitutes a huge waste of talent. The investment of providing training for council members yields a great return in council performance and productivity.

Interrelationship of Functions

Although each of the ten functions have been discussed separately the reader will recognize that none of them are performed in isolation from the others. There are many connections between all the duties and responsibilities of the advisory council. Sound planning could not occur without a thorough assessment of community needs and resources. Development of Community Education programs depends both on thorough assessment and on careful planning. Problem solving is obviously related to many of the functions: problems are identified through assessment, decision to tackle certain problems are part of the planning responsibility, and the net result of problem solving is often the creation of a class or program to address the problem. Evaluation, of course, is a critical part of each of the ten functions.

Each area in which the council functions is important to the success of Community Education, and councils need to develop skills in all the areas. At the same time, the council must be aware of the interconnections that exist between all the functions it is called upon to perform. Skills in each area and a knowledge of how each area is affected by all of the others will assure success for the council as well as for the entire Community Education program.

Even council members who have a great store of knowledge and many abilities need specific training to learn about the roles, responsibilities and functions of the advisory council and how they relate to each other. One of the surest ways to provide this very necessary taining is to conduct a comprehensive inservice for the council.

COUNCIL INSERVICE

It is highly recommended that the advisory council involve itself in a comprehensive inservice session each year for the purpose of creating self assured, knowledgeable, and skilled council members. The council inservice can be facilitated with ease if an advisory council manual has been developed. This manual should be in loose leaf notebook form so that it can be added to or changed as the need arises. A council manual aids in the orientation of new members and provides a single place for council members to retain all of their council-related materials. This manual also serves as an important reference document when the need arises. The inservice itself should contain the following minimum elements:

- Community Education Concept and Philosophy

  Every advisory council should be fully aware of the Community Education concept. Furthermore, each district should have a philosophy statement about Community Education. This statement should be developed by the advisory council and adopted by the school board. The statement should be reviewed by the council annually so that the council has full knowledge of Community Education and is in agreement with what Community Education is in their district.

- Role of the Council

  The council needs to have answers to the following questions. What actual power does it have? What is the relationship of the council to the Community Education director, to the K-12 administrators, and to the school board? What is the council relationship to the community?

- Council Organization

The council needs to know how it is organized. Where does the council fit in? How are members selected? How long do they serve? How many members are there? What is the number and length of meetings? Who are the officers? How do they function? What are the committees of the council.

- Council By-laws

A copy of the council by-laws should be included in the manual and discussion concerning the by-laws should occur. It must be emphasized that by-laws are guidelines to facilitate council functioning. If the council activities are hampered by these by-laws, the council should change them.

- Advisory Council Functions

Each of the ten council functions should be discussed with appropriate support materials for each function. As a basis for the discussion a role and function clarification exercise could be used. The purpose of this exercise would be to gain agreement on the functions and also highlight any discrepancies among council members or between council members and the Community Education administrator.

- Finance

The council needs to be fully aware of how Community Education is financed. Copies of budgets should be included in this section as well as copies of legislation affecting Community Education funding.

- Policies

Any school district policy affecting Community Education should be included. Such policies as building use, personnel, relationship to K-12 programs, and so on should be known and understood by the council.

- Group Dynamics

The advisory council should become familiar with the components of an effective group. Inservice time should be spent on clarifying and understanding the task functions and maintenance functions of group members. Councils should learn what are the essential elements of effective communication as well as the methods of developing group cohesion.* In addition to these important elements of group dynamics, councils should gain an understanding of conflict and conflict resolution, a knowledge of problem solving techniques; an awareness of brainstorming methods, and an understanding of decision making techniques, particularly consensus decision making.

An understanding of all of these aspects of group dynamics is essential for a council to be successful and effective. Each of these skills adds a new "tool" to those already possessed by the individual council member and if each is successfully implemented it moves a council closer to success.

An understanding of the various aspects of group dynamics is important but the implementation of those skills is essential. Obviously the group dynamics aspects identified above require much practice to effectively implement. Time at this initial inservice will not allow more than an overview and basic understanding of each of the elements. Councils must then put these skills into practice in their regular monthly meetings. It is recommended, therefore, that every meeting have some training component built in so that the council is constantly growing and enhancing its knowledge and skills in these important areas.

*For a discussion of these items as well as exercises suitable for use in this type of an inservice see Sally Sweningson, Connecting, A Guidebook for Community Education Council Effectiveness, The Community Education Center, College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota 55105.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Probably nothing is a better indicator of how effective or ineffective a council is than the council meeting itself. If a council meeting is effective, it is a safe bet that the council is an effective one. Conversely, if a council meeting is ineffective, the council is probably ineffective as well.

Effective meetings have a common focus on goals and tasks while at the same time maintaining a focus on group process. The council performs both task and maintenance functions and certain members take on specific roles in relation to these functions. One member may act to promote an open and balanced flow of conversation. One member may perceive his or her role as protecting individuals from personal attacks. Another member may serve as the motivator--the person who keeps the meeting moving. Each member can become aware of the particular contribution his or her role plays in the council. With this understanding, the council can develop its own dynamics for achieving its goals.

Council members know when meetings are effective and they certainly know when they are ineffective. In an ineffective meeting there is obvious and constant confusion between maintenance and task functions. Often the leader is a manipulator and he or she allows attacks on persons rather than on ideas. Roles and responsibilities of members are unclear and there are an abundance of communication problems--people are not listening or if they are, they aren't understanding. Decision making is done with a win/lose approach nad everyone knows that the council is going no place.

This brief comparison of effective and ineffective meetings highlights the necessity of council members mastering the skills outlined in the earlier discussion on inservice. Other tasks and responsibilities are also essential to the success of a meeting. These tasks and responsibilities follow in three categories: pre-meeting, the meeting, and post-meeting.

Pre-meeting

- Setting

A site must be selected that is comfortable and conducive to a good meeting. The room must be well lighted and have the proper temperature. It should include a table that will seat all council members--preferably one in which good eye contact between all members is possible. If name plates for members are used, they should be put in place before the meeting.

Several duties must be attended to before the meeting: the room must be arranged, any needed audio-visual equipment should be obtained, and coffee and refreshments should be readied. Any materials that the members will need for reference should be distributed.

- Agenda

Preparing the agenda is probably the key pre-meeting planning function. The agenda must be prepared and sent out in advance of the meeting. Generally the chairperson and the Community Education director draw up the agenda together. This insures that both council and administration concerns will be addressed at the meeting. The chairperson of each committee as well as the other council officers should be contacted for items to be included. All council members should also have the right, and be encouraged to submit agenda items.

The agenda should be mailed one week prior to the meeting. When members receive the agenda early, they have time to study and prepare for the meeting. Mailing the agenda to members stimulates interest in attending the meeting and keeps people informed of what the council is doing. It also reminds members of tasks for which they are responsible.

Despite knowing the advantages of a good, pre-planned agenda, most councils sent out agendas that looked like the following:

AGENDA

May 15, 1982 7:00 p.m.

1. Call to order
2. Roll call
3. Approval of minutes
4. Committee reports
5. Old business
6. New business
7. Announcements
8. Adjournment

An agenda such as this is useless. What does it tell us? Do we know how long the meeting will be? Do we know who is responsible for what? Does it prepare us for topics to be discussed? In reality it does little of what an agenda can and should do.

A successful agenda should provide a precise blueprint for conducting the meeting. It should include not only the categories of the above agenda but should identify both the person responsible for the agenda item and the purpose of the item--either for information or action.

A timed agenda can be a great boon to the efficiency of the meeting. By pre-determining time to be spent on each item, members can see at a glance how the time is divided and will (hopefully) limit their remarks so that the meeting can stay on schedule. The times that are alloted are serious recommendations; however, they may be altered at the time the agenda is accepted by the council.

The following page is a model of an appropriate agenda. It is sufficiently clear that any council member could be called upon to chair the meeting and could do a credible job.

Jonesville Community Education
Advisory Council Meeting
Wednesday, May 15, 1982
7:00 p.m., Jonesville High School Library

AGENDA

(1 minute)	I.	Call to Order (Chairperson)
(4 minutes)	II.	Approval of minutes (Secretary)
	III.	Sub-Committee Reports for information
(5 minutes)		a. Early Childhood (Kathy Johnson)
(5 minutes)		b. Senior Citizens (Betty Wildes)
(5 minutes)		c. Adult Education (John Thomas)
	IV.	Special Committee Reports
(7 minutes)		a. Membership (John Thomas) for information
(10 minutes)		b. By-laws (Tom Jones) for decision
	V.	Old Business
(5 minutes)		a. Fathers' Workshop Report (Carol Long) for information
		b. Summer Program Report (Mark McDonald) for information
	VI.	New Business
(5 minutes)		a. Fall brochure (Al Larson) for information
(10 minutes)		b. Program Evaluation (Joan Palm) for decision
(10 minutes)	VII.	Announcements (Chairperson)
(25 minutes)	VIII.	Inservice (Tom Jones)
(3 minutes)	IX.	Evaluation
	X.	Other
	XI.	Adjournment (Chairperson)

The Meeting

The following suggestions will help assure that the meeting accomplishes its intent.

- All meetings should start on time! The chairperson should announce the rule on starting late and then act on it. Starting late is unfair to those who come on time, and once it is known that the meeting starts on time, people will be there. On the contrary, if the meeting always starts late, people will just come later.

- When the meeting starts, review and order the agenda. Once the agenda has been accepted follow it. Every member of the council has the responsibility of helping to keep the group on track.

- Every member should help the secretary take a good set of minutes. Minutes are a brief summary of the content of the meeting's discussion and actions. They are important because they help protect the council by providing a record of council actions and the rationale for those actions. Each council member should speak clearly and insure that summaries of debates, both pro and con, are made. Councils should see that all assigned tasks are clearly understood and that they include due dates and the names of the members who are responsible.

- Too many interruptions can thwart the flow of the meeting and they should be controlled. Each member must have an opportunity to speak to each issue. One member should not be allowed to dominate discussion. One of the easiest ways to prevent this from happening is to make sure that each member has a note pad and pencil for the meeting. If Mark McDonald is constantly interrupting, the chairperson can gently but firmly state "Mark, Mary has the floor now. I'm sure your point is good. Please make a note of it and we will come back to you." This type of action clearly indicates that everyone is important on the council. It makes

Mary feel good that her opinion is respected. Be sure and return to Mark for his idea because that says to him that his idea is important as well.

- At the end of the meeting it is important to summarize the actions and decisions. Restate conclusions and assignments to insure agreement and to remind members of their tasks. The date, time and place for the next meeting should be stated and then an evaluation of the meeting should occur.

- The meeting evaluation need not be a long process but it is an important one. If a process observer was utilized--it is recommended that a council member play this role on occasion--he or she should report what was observed, both positively and negatively. This report will point out some actions and behaviors to retain as well as some that need to be changed.

  A meeting evaluation form should be used. At the conclusion of each meeting, each council member should respond to five quick questions:

  1. I felt the meeting was (Excellent____ Good____ Fair____ Poor____)

  2. I felt I contributed (Too much____ Enough____ Too little____)

  3. I felt all members had a chance to contribute (Enough____ Too little____)

  4. The meeting was good because....

  5. The meeting could be improved by....

  These evaluations should be collected and the meeting should be closed on time with any final announcements or information needed to be shared.

Post-meeting

After the meeting, the evaluations should be read and any necessary adjustments should be made prior to the next meeting. The minutes should be written up and mailed to each member and to others (superintendent, school board, city council and so on). The chairperson should follow up on all action items to see that reports are made and decisions executed. Planning for the next meeting should begin immediately.

MAINTAINING COUNCIL GROWTH

A major issue facing every council is the question of how to maintain interest, avoid burnout and promote council growth. Obviously, the council must resolve this problem on its own. Councils need to learn what is causing their own apathy and lack of motivation and they need to learn additional skills to ensure that interest and dedication remain at a high level.

- The first step is for all council members to be aware of the phases of council membership. Nearly every individual council member and thus every advisory council, proceeds through four distinct phases.

  The first phase is the Honeymoon Phase. During this phase, council members are new and are becoming familiar with their role. At this time the new members are not judged too critically nor is too much expected of them.

  The second phase is the Make-or-Break Phase. During this second phase individual members want to make an impact. They want their fellow members to recognize their abilities. As a result, members in this phase take on more than their share and devote an inordinate amount of time to council tasks.

  Phase three is the On-Top-of-the-Job Phase. At this stage, members know how to get results, they are aware of resources, and they are comfortable sharing responsibility. The members feel very secure and important.

  The fourth phase is the Leveling Out Phase. During the Leveling Out Phase, members enjoy the role less. The

excitement generated by the concept of Community Education and by council efforts is less. Boredom may set in.

If advisory councils are aware of these four phases, they will not be shocked when they find themselves in one of them--particularly the Leveling Out Phase. It is at that phase that burnout, turnover and loss of interest occur. If, however, the council is prepared for the Leveling Out Phase, they can work to move the council to the Honeymoon Phase and start the cycle all over again. The council can tackle new problems and new challenges to create new growth opportunities. Some people will not like the new direction--because they are complacent--and will leave. However, many others will sense a renewal of the excitement that they felt initially with their council involvement.

- If councils are to retain member interest, there must constantly be new challenges and issues. Councils, annually, must look at their goals to see that everything they are planning on doing isn't something that they have already done before. Councils must deal with problems as problem solvers rather than simply as programmers.

- The advisory council must also be recognized for the valuable work it has performed. Also, individual council members often aren't given the praise and recognition that they deserve. Council members must encourage the Community Education director to recognize council efforts. They must also remember to recognize their own members for work and achievements.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY

In order for freedom to exist the full potential of people must be developed. However, people cannot be developed, they can only develop themselves.

Councils have the responsibility to facilitate this development within their own communities and they must develop themselves at the same time. In this way the council can truly serve the community.

Community Education is an exciting concept with an unlimited capacity. It can be anything that the council wants it to be. It is a "becoming" concept. "Becoming" implies undergoing change or development; and "becoming" means to have an attractive effect. Community Education is both of these. It is constantly changing, and developing to meet the needs of local communities and it is also an attractive concept because of its dynamic, non-static nature.

Yet for Community Education to successfully provide the mechanisms and vehicles for people to develop themselves and for it to respond and change as the needs arise, the advisory council must be an integral part--the hub--of the Community Education program. The council must be well organized, well informed and committed to its functions. It must approach its tasks with calmness, confidence and courage. Councils will only be able to do this if they are well trained. It is to that ever ongoing process that this publication has been written.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW NOW?

(The questions at the beginning of the guidebook are repeated below. Now that you have read and studied the materials, you may wish to go back over the questions again to check your knowledge and understanding of the main ideas contained in the guidebook.)

1. What is the relationship of the advisory council to Community Education?

2. In what way are councils part of community involvement?

3. What power does the advisory council have?

4. What is the major cause of problems between the community educator and the council?

5. Should school administrators serve on the advisory council?

6. Describe the difference between a neighborhood council and a district-wide council.

7. What factors should be considered when determining council representation?

8. How can a council be assured that all segments of the community are represented?

9. List and describe three methods for selecting council members.

10. What is the optimum size for a council?

11. What is the advantage of having set terms of office for council members?

12. How many meetings per year are needed for successful council operation?

13. List responsibilities of the council chairperson.

14. Why should councils have a vice-chairperson or chairperson-elect?

15. What functions are performed by the executive committee?

16. What is the relationship between the advisory council and its committees?

17. What is the major benefit of advisory council by-laws?

18. List ten functions of advisory councils.

19. How are councils involved in planning?

20. What is the role of the council in conducting needs assessments?

21. What steps should a council follow when addressing problems?

22. How are the functions of a council interrelated?

23. What is the importance of council inservice?

24. What topics should be included in a council inservice?

25. Why are set agendas critical to effective meetings?

26. What can be done to assure full participation at council meetings?

27. Why is it important to evaluate council meetings?

28. What are the phases of group development?

29. What methods can be used for council maintenance?

30. How can recognition of council members be provided?